

## Office of Personnel Management

## § 531.222

(1) When the employee is assigned to an official worksite within the geographic boundaries of a formerly applicable special rate schedule, compare the former special rate to the rates of basic pay in the highest applicable rate range for the employee's current position of record and current official worksite. Identify the lowest step rate in that range that equals or exceeds the former special rate (or the maximum step rate, if the former special rate exceeds the range maximum). That step rate is the employee's maximum payable rate of basic pay.

(2) When the employee is assigned to an official worksite outside the geographic boundaries of the formerly applicable special rate schedule, determine the maximum payable rate as follows:

(i) Convert the former special rate to a corresponding rate (same step) in the current highest applicable rate range for the new official worksite based on the employee's position of record immediately before the reassignment.

(ii) If the rate resulting from the geographic conversion under paragraph (c)(2)(i) of this section is a special rate, that converted special rate is deemed to be the employee's former special rate and highest previous rate in applying paragraph (c)(2)(iii) of this section. If the resulting rate is not a special rate, this paragraph (c) may not be used to determine the employee's maximum payable rate. Instead, paragraph (b) of this section must be used.

(iii) Compare the employee's highest previous rate (*i.e.*, the former special rate after the geographic conversion) with the rates on the current highest applicable rate range for the new official worksite based on the employee's position of record after the reassignment. Identify the lowest step rate in that range that equals or exceeds the highest previous rate (or the maximum step rate, if the highest previous rate exceeds the range maximum). That step rate is the employee's maximum payable rate of basic pay.

(3) After setting the employee's rate of basic pay in the highest applicable rate range (not to exceed the maximum payable rate), the agency must determine any underlying rate of basic pay

to which the employee is entitled based on the employee's step rate.

(d) *When highest previous rate is based on a rate under a non-GS pay system.* When an employee's highest previous rate (as provided in § 531.222) is based on a rate of basic pay in a non-GS pay system, the agency must determine the maximum payable rate of basic pay that may be paid to the employee in his or her current GS position of record as follows:

(1) Compare the highest previous rate to the highest applicable rate range in effect at the time and place where the highest previous rate was earned. The highest applicable rate range is determined as if the employee held the current GS position of record (including grade in which pay is being set) at that time and place. Identify the lowest step rate in that range that was equal to or higher than the highest previous rate (or the maximum step rate if the highest previous rate exceeded the range maximum).

(2) Convert the step rate identified in paragraph (d)(1) of this section to a corresponding rate (same step) in the current highest applicable rate range for the employee's current GS position of record and official worksite. That step rate is the employee's maximum payable rate of basic pay.

(3) After setting the employee's rate of basic pay in the current highest applicable rate range (not to exceed the maximum payable rate), the agency must determine any underlying rate of basic pay to which the employee is entitled at the determined step rate.

[70 FR 31291, May 31, 2005, as amended at 73 FR 66152, Nov. 7, 2008]

### **§ 531.222 Rates of basic pay that may be used as the highest previous rate.**

(a)(1) Subject to the conditions in this section and § 531.223, the highest previous rate used in applying § 531.221 is—

(i) The highest rate of basic pay previously received by an individual while employed in a civilian position in any part of the Federal Government (including service with the government of the District of Columbia for employees first employed by that government before October 1, 1987), without regard to

## § 531.223

## 5 CFR Ch. I (1–1–11 Edition)

whether the position was in the GS pay system; or

(ii) The highest rate of basic pay in effect when a GS employee held his or her highest GS grade and highest step within that grade.

(2) The highest previous rate must be a rate of basic pay received by an employee while serving on a regular tour of duty—

(i) Under an appointment not limited to 90 days or less; or

(ii) For a continuous period of not less than 90 days under one or more appointments without a break in service.

(b) For periods of service as a GS employee, the highest previous rate may not be a special rate, except as provided in paragraph (c) of this section. If the highest previous rate is a locality rate, the underlying GS rate or an LEO special base rate associated with that locality rate must be used as the highest previous rate in applying § 531.221(b).

(c) An agency may use a GS employee's special rate established under 5 U.S.C. 5305 and 5 CFR part 530, subpart C, or 38 U.S.C. 7455 as the highest previous rate when all of the following conditions apply:

(1) The employee is reassigned to another position in the same agency at the same grade level;

(2) The special rate is the employee's rate of basic pay immediately before the reassignment; and

(3) An authorized agency official finds that the need for the services of the employee, and the employee's contribution to the program of the agency, will be greater in the position to which reassigned. An agency must make such determinations on a case-by-case basis. In each case, the agency must document the determination to use the special rate as an employee's highest previous rate in writing.

(d) When an agency is barred from using a special rate established under 5 U.S.C. 5305 and 5 CFR part 530, subpart C, or 38 U.S.C. 7455 as an employee's highest previous rate under § 531.223(g), the agency must consider a special rate employee's underlying GS rate (or LEO special base rate, if applicable) in determining the employee's highest pre-

vious rate for the purpose of applying paragraph (b) of this section.

[70 FR 31291, May 31, 2005, as amended at 70 FR 74995, Dec. 19, 2005]

### § 531.223 Rates of basic pay that may not be used as the highest previous rate.

The highest previous rate may not be based on the following:

(a) A rate received under an appointment as an expert or consultant under 5 U.S.C. 3109;

(b) A rate received in a position to which the employee was temporarily promoted for less than 1 year, except upon permanent placement in a position at the same or higher grade;

(c) A rate received in a position from which the employee was reassigned or reduced in grade for failure to satisfactorily complete a probationary period as a supervisor or manager;

(d) A rate received by an individual while employed by the government of the District of Columbia who was first employed by that government on or after October 1, 1987;

(e) A rate received by an individual while employed by a Department of Defense or Coast Guard nonappropriated fund instrumentality;

(f) A rate received solely during a period of interim relief under 5 U.S.C. 7701(b)(2)(A);

(g) A special rate established under 5 U.S.C. 5305 and 5 CFR part 530, subpart C, or 38 U.S.C. 7455 (except as provided in § 531.222(c));

(h) A rate received under a void appointment or a rate otherwise contrary to applicable law or regulation;

(i) A rate received as a member of the uniformed services; or

(j) A retained rate under 5 U.S.C. 5363 or a similar rate under another legal authority.

[70 FR 31291, May 31, 2005, as amended at 73 FR 66153, Nov. 7, 2008]

#### SPECIAL RULES FOR GM EMPLOYEES

### § 531.241 Retaining and losing GM status.

(a) An employee retains status as a GM employee (as defined in § 531.203) when detailed to any position or when reassigned to another GS position in which the employee continues to be a